paſſed into a law; and as the ſpirit and ſenfe of their tranſactions are to be gathered in the completeſt man­ner from the papers which were framed by themſelves, it is proper to attend to them with a punctilious exactneſs. Their petitions were few and explicit.

I. They could not, in conſequence of principles which they had embraced from a conviction of their truth, par­ticipate in the Romiſh religion. It was therefore their deſire, that all the acts of parliament, giving authority to the church to proceed againſt them as heretics, ſhould be abrogated; or, at leaſt, that their power ſhould be ſuſpended till the diſputes which had ariſen were deter­mined and brought to a concluſion.

II. They did not mean that all men ſhould be at li­berty to profeſs what religion they pleaſed, without the controul of authority. They contented that all tranſgreſſors in matters of faith ſhould be carried before the temporal judge. But it was their wiſh that the clergy ſhould have only the power to accuſe; and they thought it conformable to juſtice, that a copy of the criminal charge ſhould be lodged with the party upon trial, and that a competent time ſhould be allowed him to defend himſelf.

III. They inſiſted, that every defence conſiſtent with law ſhould be permitted to the party accuſed; and that objections to witneſſes, founded in truth and reaſon, ſhould operate to his favour.

IV. They deſired that the party accuſed ſhould have permiſſion to interpret and explain his own opinions; and that his declaration ſhould carry a greater evidence than the depoſition of any witneſs: as no perſon ought to be puniſhed for religion, who is not obſtinate in a wicked or damnable tenet.

V. In fine, they urged, that no Proteſtant ſhould be condemned for hereſy, without being convicted, by the word of God, of the want of that faith which is neceſſary to ſalvation.

The Congregation preſented theſe articles to the queen-regent, expecting that ſhe would not only propoſe them to the three eſtates aſſembled in parliament, but employ all her influence to recommend them. But finding themſelves diſappointed, they began to ſuſpect her ſincerity; and they were ſenſible that their pe­titions, though they ſhould be carried in parliament, could not paſs into a law without her conſent. They therefore abſtained from preſenting them; but as their complaints and deſires were fully known in parliament, they ordered a ſolemn declaration to be read there in their behalf, and demanded that it ſhould be inſerted in the records of the nation. In this declaration, after expreſſing their regret for having been diſappointed in their ſcheme of reformation, they proteſted, that no blame ſhould be imputed to them for continuing in their religion, which they believed to be founded in the word of God; that no danger of life, and no political pains, ſhould be incurred by them, for diſregarding ſtatutes which ſupport idolatry, and for violating rites which are of human invention; and that, if inſurrections and tumults ſhould diſturb the realm, from the diverſity of re­ligious opinions, and if abuſes ſhould be corrected by violence, all the guilt, diſorder, and inconvenience thence ariſing, inſtead of being applied to them, ſhould be aſcribed to thoſe ſolely who had refuſed a timely redreſs of wrongs, and who had deſpiſed petitions preſented with the humility of faithful ſubjects, and for the purpoſes of

eſtabliſhing the commandments of God, and a moſt juſt and ſalutary reformation.

The three eſtates received this formidable proteſt with attention and reſpect; but the intention of inſerting it in the national records was abandoned by the Congrega­tion, upon a formal promiſe from the queen-regent, that all the matters in controverſy ſhould ſpeedily be brought by her to a fortunate iſſue.

While the Proteſtants were thus making the moſt vi­gorous exertions in behalf of their ſpiritual liberties, the queen-regent, in order to eſtabliſh herſelf the more ef­fectually, uſed every effort to promote the marriage of her daughter with the dauphin of France. In 1557, commiſſioners were appointed to negociate this marri­age; but while theſe negociations were going on, the court of France acted in the moſt perfidious manner. At the age of 15, after ſolemnly ratifying the-indepen­dency of Scotland, and the ſucceſſion of the crown in the houſe of Hamilton, queen Mary was influenced by the king and her uncles the princes of Lorraine to ſign privately three extraordinary deeds or inſtruments. By the firſt ſhe conveyed the kingdom of Scotland to the king of France and his heirs, in the default of children of her own body. By the ſecond ſhe aſſigned him, if ſhe ſhould die without children, the poſſeſſion of Scot­land, till he ſhould receive a million of pieces of gold, or be amply recompenſed for the ſums expended by him in the education of the queen of Scotland in France. By the third ſhe confirmed both theſe grants in an expreſs declaration, that they contained the pure and genuine ſentiments of her mind; and that any pa­pers which might be obtained, either before or after her marriage, by means of the Scottiſh parliament, ſhould be invalid, and of no force nor efficacy. On the 24th of April, the nuptials were celebrated; and the dauphin, Francis, was allowed to aſſume the title of king of Scotland. The French court demanded for him the crown and other ensigns of royalty belonging to Scot­land; but the commiſſioners had no power to comply with their requeſt. It was then deſired, that when they returned home, they ſhould uſe all their influence to procure the crown-matrimonial of Scotland for the dauphin. This alſo was refuſed; the court of France was diſguſted; and four of the commiſſioners died, it was fuppoſed of poiſon, given them by the princes of Lorraine. This ſubject, however, was preſſed, on the return of the ſurvivirrg commiſſioners, by the king of France himſelf, the queen of Scotland, and the queen- regent. The Proteſtants alſo joined their intereſt, ho­ping by that means to gain over the queen and queen- regent to their party; ſo that an act of parliament was at length paſſed, by which the crown-matrimonial was given to the dauphin during the time of his marriage with queen Mary; but without any prejudice to the li­berties of the kingdom, to the heirs of her body, or to the order of ſucceſſion. With ſo many reſtraints, it is difficult to ſee the advantages which could accrue from this gift ſo earneſtly ſought after; and it is very probable, that the uſurpations of France in conſequence of it, would have been productive of many diſturbances; but theſe were prevented by the death of Francis in December 1560.

But beſore this event took place, Scotland was, by the intrigues of France, involved in confuſion on ano­ther account. After the death of Mary queen of Eng-